

# Guidelines for food businesses at temporary events

# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b> .....   | <b>3</b>  |
| What is a temporary event?.....   | 3         |
| Obligations on selling food .....   | 3         |
| Which agencies enforce the Act and Code? .....                                | 3         |
| Charities and community groups .....  | 4         |
| <b>Administration</b> .....   | <b>5</b>  |
| Notification .....  | 5         |
| Licensing.....  | 5         |
| Council approvals .....   | 5         |
| Training requirements.....  | 6         |
| Inspections .....   | 6         |
| Fees and charges.....   | 7         |
| <b>Conditions of operation</b> .....  | <b>7</b>  |
| Location of food stalls .....   | 7         |
| Toilets .....   | 7         |
| Maintenance .....   | 7         |
| Garbage and recyclable matter .....   | 7         |
| Animals and pests .....   | 8         |
| Children in food stalls .....   | 8         |
| Water and ice .....   | 8         |
| <b>Facilities</b> .....   | <b>8</b>  |
| Construction of temporary food stalls .....                                   | 8         |
| Fixtures.....   | 9         |
| Cleaning, sanitising and hand washing facilities .....                        | 9         |
| Waste disposal .....  | 9         |
| <b>Food handling</b> .....  | <b>10</b> |
| Food suppliers .....  | 10        |
| Preparing food at home .....  | 10        |
| Food storage .....  | 10        |
| Potentially hazardous foods and temperature control.....                      | 11        |
| Cross contamination.....  | 11        |
| Food display .....  | 12        |
| Crockery, wrappings and packaging .....                                       | 12        |
| Single-use items .....  | 12        |
| Food Safety Supervisor .....  | 12        |
| Food handler training requirements .....                                      | 13        |
| Showing that your food is safe .....  | 13        |
| Staff illness .....   | 13        |
| Requirements for food handlers .....  | 13        |
| Hand washing.....   | 14        |
| Money handling/touching customers' hands when serving food.....               | 14        |
| Cleaning and sanitising .....   | 14        |
| Labelling and declaring allergens.....  | 14        |
| <b>Electricity and gas supplies, fire extinguishers and work safety</b> ..... | <b>15</b> |
| Pollution prevention .....  | 16        |
| <b>Temporary food stall layout</b> .....                                      | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Temporary food stall checklist</b> .....                                   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Contact information</b> .....  | <b>19</b> |
| Fire and Rescue NSW .....   | 19        |
| <b>Key definitions</b> .....  | <b>20</b> |

## Introduction

These guidelines inform businesses selling food at temporary events in NSW of their legal requirements in relation to the NSW *Food Act 2003* (the Act) and the Food Standard Code (the Code). They provide information on requirements such as power supply and waste disposal, and suggest ways to maintain food safety at the event.

Businesses and local council environmental health officers (EHOs) can use this guide to assess compliance with the Act and the Code.

The primary aim of these guidelines is to make food businesses aware of their legal requirements and to suggest ways to assure food safety when selling food. It also provides businesses with a guide to applicable fees and charges that councils may levy.

Food businesses wishing to sell food at temporary events should contact the council where the event is based prior to operating to check if a permit to trade on public land is required, if an inspection must be completed, if there are any applicable fees or if there are any other requirements.

## What is a temporary event?

A temporary event is any occasion of limited duration or periodic in nature where food is sold to consumers from a temporary structure or vehicle. Examples include fairs, festivals, markets and shows.

These guidelines cover all types of food businesses at temporary events and provide guidance for additional requirements when the temporary event continues over several days, introducing additional risks. The checklist provided in the document can be used to self-assess compliance with general requirements.

While mobile food vending vehicles often operate at temporary events, it is recommended that they refer to the Food Authority's [Guidelines for mobile food vending vehicles \(PDF\)](#).

## Obligations on selling food

A person handling or selling food or operating stalls used for selling food for human consumption, including drinks, produce, fruit and vegetables or pre-packaged food, is deemed to be a 'food business'. This includes not-for-profit operations.

A food business is required to sell safe and suitable food in accordance with the Act, which also mandates compliance with the national Code. Of particular relevance for temporary events are parts 1.2 (labelling) and 3.1.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.2A and 3.2.3 (food safety standards) of the Code, which can be accessed at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au).

Failure to comply with the requirements may lead to enforcement action. Depending on the food safety risk identified, this action may include a warning letter, improvement notice, penalty notice, seizure, prohibition or prosecution. The NSW Food Authority (Food Authority) and councils generally follow an escalating enforcement policy. For more information see [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/ip/audits-and-compliance/compliance](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/ip/audits-and-compliance/compliance).

## Which agencies enforce the Act and Code?

In most cases, local councils are responsible for the food surveillance of the retail sector and enforce the requirements of the Act and Code; this includes food for retail sale at temporary events.

The Food Authority is only responsible for surveillance if there is processing of products that require a licence at that premises, such as:

- businesses that conduct food service to vulnerable persons
- high-risk plant product businesses
- businesses that handle or process meat

- businesses that further process seafood
- businesses that handle shellfish
- dairy producers, factories and vendors
- businesses that produce or process eggs and egg-related products.

## Charities and community groups

Charities and community groups are those which do not derive funds for personal financial gain but direct all profits back to the community (such as local sports clubs, and Lions and Rotary clubs).

The Act and Code apply to all food businesses including those selling food for charity or community purposes. It is always an offence to sell food that is unsafe or unsuitable.

Charities and community groups are exempt from some requirements:

- Notification of the food business is not required if the food sold is not potentially hazardous, for example, scones, or is to be consumed immediately after thorough cooking, such as a sausage sizzle.
- Food Safety Supervisor, food handler training and being able to show food is safe, under the Code's Standard 3.2.2A, do not apply if the food is handled or sold for the purpose of raising funds solely for community or charitable causes.
- Some labelling requirements do not apply; however, it is a requirement to provide information to customers on request about the presence of the following food allergens in any ingredients:
  - cereals containing gluten (barley, oats, rye, wheat)
  - wheat (even if no gluten is present)
  - crustacean
  - mollusc
  - fish
  - egg
  - milk (all animal milk)
  - peanut
  - sesame
  - Soy, soya or soybean
  - almond
  - Brazil nut
  - cashew
  - hazelnut
  - macadamia
  - pecan
  - pine nut
  - pistachio
  - walnut
  - lupin
  - added sulphites in concentrations of 10 mg/kg or more.

For more information visit [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or contact your local council.

## Administration

### Notification

Food businesses that trade at temporary events must notify their details to the local council before trading for the first time. Businesses must notify their home jurisdiction council where food is prepared before sale at a temporary event, and the local councils where they intend to trade. Notification is a compulsory requirement.

Appropriate details for notification include:

- contact details for the food business, including the name of the food business and the name and business address of the proprietor
- the nature of the food business
- the location of all food premises of the food business that are within the jurisdiction of the enforcement agency.

Notification may be made to council in any form that includes the above details.

The only exceptions are:

- businesses licensed or notified with the Food Authority, or
- not-for-profit fundraising events where there is sale of low-risk food (tea/coffee and biscuits) or sale of food that is thoroughly cooked immediately before consumption, such as a sausage sizzle.

Notification is a one-off process unless your details change, in which case you are required to provide an update to the appropriate authority.

### Licensing

Some retailers at temporary events require a Food Authority licence if there is an activity that requires a licence in the business, such as:

- businesses that conduct food service to vulnerable persons
- high-risk plant product businesses
- businesses that handle or process meat
- businesses that further process seafood
- businesses that handle shellfish
- dairy producers, factories and vendors
- businesses that produce or process eggs and egg-related products.

If you carry out any of these activities, contact the Food Authority well before the event to determine whether you require a licence.

### Council approvals

Local councils are generally responsible for the approval of temporary events and the stalls retailing food (including alcohol) at that event. Some councils require development consent for temporary events, so you may be required to lodge a development application. Some councils require the temporary site itself to be registered/approved (for example, s68 approval to operate issued under the Local Government Act 1993).

It is important to check specific requirements with the local council well before the event.

To avoid unnecessary interruption to your business, have your valid council approval available so that inspecting officers (and customers) can retrieve information about the stall operator if required.

## Training requirements

Food businesses selling unpackaged, potentially hazardous ready-to-eat food at temporary events will need to appoint a Food Safety Supervisor. Ensure this is done well before the event (refer to page 12 for details). In addition, all food handlers must have skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene commensurate with their food handling activities (see page 13 for details).

## Inspections

The inspection of stall operators trading at temporary events are conducted by the local council's environmental health officers (EHOs) who are authorised officers under the Act. The frequency of inspection can vary and may depend on any food safety risk of the food being handled or any previous enforcement history. They check that good food safety practices are in place, such as temperature control, cleanliness, hand washing and labelling (refer to the checklist at end of this document).

Small events where low-risk foods are sold may not require inspection. Large events, particularly where high-risk foods are sold or where businesses have a poor compliance history, are likely to be inspected.

If stall operators trade across council boundaries, most councils will use a home jurisdiction rule. This means the stall operator will be inspected by the council local to where that business originates. That council is known as the 'home council'.

Other councils in which the stall operator trades are entitled to request to see a copy of the most recent inspection report (less than 18 months old) from the proprietor. If the report is satisfactory (only minor issues identified), the council EHO should not conduct a further inspection, unless there is a perceived risk to food safety and public health.

If a recent inspection report is not provided by the stall operator, is more than 18 months old, or has a major noncompliance issue outstanding, then the council EHO has the discretion to carry out an inspection and charge an inspection fee.

Stall operators/proprietors are responsible for organising to have an inspection when they begin to trade and providing a current inspection report to officers from another council in whose area they trade.

**Carry your most recent inspection report with you whenever you are trading from your temporary stall.**

Councils adopt a risk-based approach to determine when to inspect food businesses at temporary events. The risk factors considered are:

- the number of food businesses trading at the event
- whether the businesses provide (in advance) evidence of a satisfactory inspection by their home jurisdiction or other enforcement agency
- whether there has been poor compliance history of businesses at the event
- any food safety complaints made against food businesses trading at the event
- the type of food being sold (potentially hazardous food vs non-potentially hazardous food)
- estimated number of visitors to the event
- duration of the event
- access to facilities and services such as potable water, to wastewater management staff toilets, waste management, electricity.

It is recommended that a business keeps a copy of their last inspection report at their premises to demonstrate compliance history.

## Fees and charges

The local council may charge fees for inspecting your food handling activities under the Local Government Act 1993. The fee amount can vary between councils.

Check with the local council/s in which you trade to find out what fees apply to you. There may be other fees and charges levied by councils for approval to trade under other legislation. Please contact your local council for details.

Councils can levy an inspection fee against the event organiser, or against the individual temporary food businesses.

The inspection fee levied can be:

- a fixed fee, or
- based on the council's hourly food inspection rate.

If council decides an additional inspection is required for a business (because of poor compliance), an inspection fee can be levied against the food business.

---

## Conditions of operation

### Location of food stalls

- Stalls should be set up on sealed ground and away from drainage lines to avoid cross contamination and maintain stall cleanliness. If only unsealed sites are available or where potentially hazardous food is being prepared on site, the ground where food is being prepared and stored should be completely covered.
- Multi-day events that remain committed to trading regardless of weather conditions will need to implement further measures such as raised floors. Floor coverings must be easily cleaned and non-absorbent.
- The open side of the stall should not face prevailing winds to reduce dust, odour and insect problems.
- Stalls should be located away from toilets and garbage areas to prevent airborne contamination.

### Toilets

Food business operators (and event management) must ensure that adequate toilet facilities are available for food handlers. This includes adequate hand washing facilities including the provision of warm water, soap and an effective means of drying hands (such as paper towels). Multi-day events should have an appropriate ratio of staff only toilets to the number of food stalls trading. Using [the Building Code of Australia table F2.3](#), the recommended ratio for toilets in class 6 buildings (restaurant/café) is 1 toilet per 15 employees.

### Maintenance

The food stall and its fixtures, fittings and equipment, toilets and hand washing facilities, as well as parts of vehicles used to transport food, must be kept clean, sanitised (where appropriate) and in good, working order (free from dirt, fumes, smoke, odours and other contaminants). Timber surfaces should be avoided and if used must be maintained so they are non-absorbent and easily cleaned.

### Garbage and recyclable matter

Food business operators (and event management) must ensure there are:

- adequate rubbish dumpsters located away from food stalls so that vermin and flying insects are not attracted to food preparation areas

- adequately sized, enclosed rubbish bins at each food stall
- arrangements to dispose of garbage at the end of the day
- recyclable, re-useable or compostable products wherever possible.

## Animals and pests

Take all practicable measures to prevent pests (including birds, spiders, wildlife and flying insects) from entering the food stall or coming into contact with any fixtures, equipment or parts of vehicles used to transport food.

Animals are not permitted to enter a food stall at any time. 'Assistance animals', as defined in section 9 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, are permitted in public dining and drinking areas. Assistance animals include guide dogs trained to help people with disabilities.

## Children in food stalls

For health and safety reasons, children should not be allowed to enter the preparation area of a food stall.

Camping in or near food stalls is not permitted. A designated area is usually set aside for staff camping at multi-day events.

## Water and ice

- Potable water (safe for human consumption) must be used for washing and preparing food, or as an ingredient in food. Town water supplies are considered potable. Using water from other sources may be suitable but this should be checked with the local council.
- Only food-grade materials should be used to store water.
- Ice used to keep food cool or to add to food or drink must be made from potable water and treated as food. Do not break up ice bags on bare ground, instead use a food preparation sink or counter.

---

## Facilities

Facilities should be constructed to ensure a good standard of food hygiene and allow for easy cleaning and maintenance (see diagrams on page 17).

## Construction of temporary food stalls

Temporary food stalls include any structure set up for an occasional event such as a fete, fair, market or festival, where it can be demonstrated that food safety will not be compromised.

### Standard of construction

- If there walls and a ceiling needed to protect food, ensure there is adequate ventilation if using appliances connected to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders (this can be achieved by using a fine mesh wall material).
- Entire food premises (including barbeques and cool rooms) to be adequately screened to reduce the risk of food contamination and to restrict public access.
- Floors to be in the form of a non-absorbent easily cleaned material (such as vinyl) cut larger than the floor area to enable it to be turned up at the wall and clipped or fixed into position. Floors in multi-day events should be raised to account for wet weather and should consider high traffic areas, that is, between the stall and cool room. The event organiser may coordinate the construction of stalls and should consider these requirements.



- Walls to be non-absorbent and easily cleaned. The framework of the wall panels should support the fabric taut and rigid. No part of the walls should flap in the breeze or be unsecured.
- Ceiling to be of similar construction to the walls.
- Whole structure to be securely fixed together when assembled and protected against wind.

For pre-packaged and low-risk foods at single-day events, there may be exemptions from certain construction requirements due to the reduced food safety risk. Contact the local council to enquire about exemptions.

Examples of pre-packaged and low-risk foods are pre-bottled or sealed jams, honey, pickles and drinks; pre-wrapped and sealed cakes, toffees and biscuits; whole fruit, vegetables and nuts intended to be washed or peeled before eating.

## Fixtures

Food preparation surfaces (such as counters, shelves, stands) must be made from rigid, smooth and durable material, free of cracks or joints. Timber surfaces should be painted, laminated or clear finished. Shelves should be at least 150 mm off the floor to avoid cross contamination and facilitate effective cleaning and sanitising. Metal end sections should be sealed.

The preparation and display of food, including unpackaged ready-to-eat food, must be protected from likely contamination from customers. Sneeze barriers or other enclosures should be considered.

For pre-packaged and low-risk foods, there may be exemptions from certain facility requirements due to the reduced food safety risk. Contact the local council for details.

## Cleaning, sanitising and hand washing facilities

- A sealed container of warm potable water (minimum capacity 10 litres) with a tap and suitable bowls or containers should be provided for cleaning, sanitising and hand washing. Clean single-use towels, detergent and food-grade surface sanitiser must be available for use. For pre-packaged and low-risk foods, there may be exemptions from certain facility requirements due to the reduced food safety risk. You will need approval in writing from the local council if you wish to be exempt from providing warm potable water for hand washing. Multi-day events will require reticulated potable water supply usually provided by the event organiser.
- Reusable eating and drinking utensils, dinnerware and tableware must be washed and sanitised in separate receptacles used only for that purpose. All food preparation utensils, equipment and eating utensils (reusable and disposable) should be stored a minimum 150mm off the ground.
- A hand washing facility, separate from other facilities and used only for that purpose, must be provided where it is easily and readily accessible, for example at the staff entrance to the stall. Warm water is needed for effective hand washing and delivered through a single outlet to a dedicated hand basin. Soap and single-use towels must be provided at the hand washing facility. Bars also require hand washing facilities.
- A suitable sanitising agent must be available for sanitising food utensils and food contact surfaces. Where utensils are stored in a sanitising solution between uses, the solution should be changed frequently to keep it clean.
- At multi-day events stall holders must include a separate sink for food preparation only.

## Waste disposal

Wastewater must be disposed of lawfully. Contact your local water authority prior to the event for advice.

Multi-day event organisers will usually provide bulk wastewater disposal containers and stall holders should make arrangements to pump their wastewater to that container/location rather than carrying buckets.

A garbage bin with a tight-fitting lid should be provided in the stall for solid waste that is then emptied into the bulk bin frequently and at the end of the day's trade.

---

## Food handling

The requirements for handling food for sale for human consumption are outlined in the following sections of the Food Standards Code:

- Standard 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements
- Standard 3.2.2A – Food Safety Management Tools
- Standard 3.2.3 – Food Premises and Equipment.

These are on the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au).

Some of these requirements also apply to pre-packaged food and low-risk food. Factsheets and user guides (including for charitable and community not-for-profit organisations) are available on the Food Authority website at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

## Food suppliers

Obtain all food products from reputable suppliers, as generally they operate under strict quality guidelines. Keep copies of invoices to trace back if needed in the future.

## Preparing food at home

Notification of food business details, construction of facilities, labelling and food handling requirements of the Act apply to the preparation of food for sale from a home kitchen. They also apply to pre-packaged and low-risk produce and foods. Approval to use home kitchens as part of a food business may be required by local councils. Contact the local council for more information. See also the Food Authority's Home-based food businesses factsheet.

## Transport of food to events

All food and packaging for the event must be transported so that dust, pests and other likely sources of contamination are excluded. Whole fruits and vegetables and grains which are to be further processed generally do not need to be transported under temperature control. (See the Food Authority's guideline Potentially hazardous foods: Foods that require temperature control for safety).

Foods that are required to be stored under temperature control or kept frozen must be placed under strict temperature control or frozen during transportation. Food-grade plastic or insulated containers with tight-fitting lids may be used for some foods. Where food comes into contact with the surface of the container, it should be impervious to moisture, constructed of a food-grade material and be capable of being easily cleaned and sanitised. Lids should not be removed from food containers when in transit or unattended.

Commercial food transport vehicles should be suitable for this purpose.

## Food storage

- Food business operators must ensure that all foods are stored so that they are protected from likely contamination, and that the environmental conditions will not adversely affect the safety or suitability of the food.
- There must be separately located storage facilities for items such as chemicals, clothing and personal belongings, which may contaminate food or food contact surfaces.
- Food including packaged drinks and alcohol should be stored at least 150mm above the floor and kept out of direct sunlight.

- Potentially hazardous foods like poultry, meat, dairy products, seafood and egg-based products must be stored under temperature control. If intended to be stored frozen, the food must remain frozen during storage. (See [Potentially hazardous foods: Foods that require temperature control for safety](#)).
- Refrigeration facilities should be large enough to hold potentially hazardous foods under temperature control at all times. This may require the use of portable coolrooms. Do not overstock refrigerators or portable coolrooms, as the air will not be able to circulate freely around the foods. Food must be stored off the floor in cool rooms and freezers.
- Coolrooms, fridges and freezers should be located out of direct sunlight or otherwise shade. For multi-day events, access to coolrooms should be via a hard surface, such as duckboards.
- Cold foods should be stored at or below 5°C.
- Hot food appliances (bain maries and display cases) should enable hot foods to be kept at, or above, 60°C at all times.

### Potentially hazardous foods and temperature control

One of the most common causes of foodborne illness is the storage and display of potentially hazardous foods at inadequate temperatures for extended periods. This can lead to the rapid and sustained growth of food poisoning bacteria.

Examples of potentially hazardous foods include:

- cooked meat
- dairy products
- seafood
- prepared salads, raw salad vegetables
- cooked rice and pasta
- processed soya bean products
- other processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts
- other protein-rich foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches and quiches.

A food business must, when storing and displaying potentially hazardous food, store it under temperature control. If the food is intended to be stored frozen, ensure the food remains frozen during storage and display. Temperature control means maintaining cold food at a temperature of 5°C or below, or hot food at 60°C or above.

Canned and bottled foods, dried or pickled products and some other processed foods, such as dried pasta, pasteurised juices and dried powder products, are not considered to be potentially hazardous unless opened or reconstituted.

All food businesses that handle potentially hazardous foods are required to have a readily accessible, accurate, probe-type thermometer (+/- 1°C accuracy). Ensure the thermometer probe is cleaned and sanitised before it is used. It is good practice to monitor the temperature of hot or cold foods under operating conditions to ensure adequate temperature control is being maintained.

Additional information on potentially hazardous food and its management can be found in [Potentially hazardous foods: Foods that require temperature control for safety](#) and [Guidance on the 4-hour/2-hour rule](#) at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au).

### Cross contamination

Adequate measures must be taken to prevent cross contamination from raw foods to cooked foods. This includes:

- ensuring there are separate utensils for cooked and raw meats, poultry and seafood

- covering all food unless it is being processed or prepared – unprotected food must not be left unattended
- keeping cooked meat and salads separate from raw meat, raw poultry and raw seafood
- washing hands after handling raw meats, raw poultry, raw seafood and raw vegetables
- storing food, cooking and eating utensils off the floor
- having appropriate cleaning equipment (mops, buckets, brooms) for multi-day events and all-weather conditions
- changes of footwear so that in wet weather circumstances muddy shoes are not worn in the stall
- stall holders should consider allocating single tasks (food preparation, cleaning, serving or handling money) to individuals as a strategy to reduce the potential for cross contamination especially during peak service periods.

## Food display

When displaying food, a business must take all practicable measures to protect the food from likely contamination by customers, dust, fumes or insects. This may mean using plastic food wrap, sealed containers, sneeze barriers, food covers or other effective measures.

## Crockery, wrappings and packaging

- Single-use, disposable eating and drinking utensils may be used., but only where these items meet the requirements of the Plastic Reduction Act 2021. More information is available at [epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/plastics/bans-guidance](https://epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/plastics/bans-guidance).
- If re-usable dinnerware or tableware is used, a business must ensure that an appropriate method for cleaning and sanitising is used (machine dishwashers are recommended).
- Crockery items that are chipped, cracked, broken or are in a state of disrepair must not be used for food.
- Packaging material must be food-grade and unlikely to cause food contamination. Only clean and unprinted paper, food wrap or packaging must be used for wrapping or storing food.

## Single-use items

The Plastics Reduction Act 2021 bans the supply of single-use plastic straws, cutlery, stirrers, bowls, plates and other items.

Permitted single-use straws, eating utensils and other items that come into contact with food and a person's mouth must be protected from contamination until use and not re-used.

## Food Safety Supervisor

Food businesses need to appoint a Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) if they are handling and selling food that is:

- ready-to-eat
- potentially hazardous (requires temperature control)
- not sold and served in the supplier's original package.

One FSS needs to be appointed for the premises (tent or stall structure). If you have more than 1 premises at the event, then a different FSS needs to be appointed for each premises. A copy of the FSS certificate for your appointed FSS must be kept at the premises. You do not need to notify the local council of your FSS.

The FSS should work onsite to oversee food handling but they do not have to be there all the time.

Charitable and community not-for-profit organisations do not need to appoint a FSS if they are handling or selling food for the purpose of raising funds solely for community or charitable causes, or if the food is provided free to the community.

For more information on Food Safety Supervisor requirements, go to [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/fss](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/fss)

## Food handler training requirements

All food businesses must ensure their food handlers have skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene matters appropriate to the type of foods they are preparing/handling and their work activities.

To meet their obligations, businesses can choose how food handlers are trained, but it should cover:

- safe handling of food
- understanding of food contamination
- cleaning and sanitising of food premises and equipment
- personal hygiene.

Various online food safety training programs, courses from vocational training providers, past experience, or training developed by the business, may be used or recognised.

For more information on food handler training requirements, and to access the Food Authority's free food handler training course, see [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/handlerbasics](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/handlerbasics)

## Showing that your food is safe

Food businesses that process unpackaged, potentially hazardous food into a food that is ready-to-eat and potentially hazardous must be able to show their food is safe under Standard 3.2.2A of the Code. These businesses must be able to demonstrate they are monitoring and managing key food safety risks related to receiving, storing, processing, displaying and transporting potentially hazardous food, and cleaning and sanitising.

The requirements can be met by either:

- demonstrating safe food handling practices, such as having a written instruction sheet or standard operating procedure, and/or being able to walk and talk an authorised officer through their food handling practices, or
- keeping records.

For more information on this requirement, go to [Showing food is safe](#).

## Staff illness

A person who is feeling unwell or suffering from a contagious illness must not handle food for sale. Symptoms may include cold or flu symptoms, diarrhoea, vomiting, sore throat, fever, jaundice and infectious skin conditions.

A food handler must notify their supervisor if they know or suspect that they may have contaminated food.

## Requirements for food handlers

When engaged in any food handling operation, a food handler must:

- not contaminate food or food contact surfaces with their body or clothing
- prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food
- wear only clean outer clothing
- cover all dressing and bandages on exposed body parts with a waterproof dressing

- not eat over uncovered food or food contact surfaces
- not sneeze, blow or cough over uncovered food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- not spit, smoke or use tobacco while working in the food stall
- not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.

## Hand washing

A food handler must wash their hands using soap and warm water, then dry them with single use, towels:

- before commencing or re-commencing handling food
- immediately before handling ready-to-eat food after handling raw food
- immediately after using the toilet
- immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating, drinking or touching their hair, scalp or a body opening, and before using disposable gloves for handling food. If wearing gloves, you should change them as often as you are required to wash your hands.

## Money handling/touching customers' hands when serving food

While the likelihood of contamination from customers' hands when exchanging money is low, consideration should be given to minimising the risk. Examples include using a disposable glove or nominating one staff member to handle money only.

## Cleaning and sanitising

- The food stall must be maintained to a standard of cleanliness where there is no accumulation of garbage or recycled matter (except in appropriate containers), food waste, dirt, grease or other visible matter.
- All fixtures, fittings and equipment must be maintained and cleaned so there is no accumulation of food waste, dirt, grease or other visible matter.
- Eating and drinking utensils must be in a clean, sanitary and undamaged condition immediately before each use.
- Food contact surfaces (such as equipment and utensils) must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition to reduce the likelihood of contaminating food. 'Sanitary' means cleaning first, followed by heat and/or chemical treatment at the right concentration, or some other process to reduce the number of bacteria to a level unlikely to compromise the safety of the food. 'Food-grade' chlorine-based sanitisers can be used for this purpose.
- The containers used for chemical storage should be appropriately labelled.
- Chemicals must not be stored near food or any packaging likely to come in contact with food to avoid the risk of contamination.
- On closing each night, stalls at multi-day events must be thoroughly cleaned, sanitised where required, waste should be removed from inside and near the stall, and all food secured in food-grade containers. Food preparation surfaces should be cleaned and sanitised again upon reopening as the stall, which is not vermin proof, is left unattended and unprotected from night time visitors (insects, vermin, and wildlife).

## Labelling and declaring allergens

All food businesses are responsible for managing allergen risk and must follow rules set out in the Code.

Food businesses must declare allergens on the label if one is required. For more information on food labelling, visit [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/food-labelling](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/food-labelling)

Unpackaged food is exempt from most labelling requirements however, food businesses must either display allergen information next to the food or provide allergen information if requested by a customer.

The following allergens must be declared:

- wheat
- gluten\*
- fish
- crustacean
- mollusc
- egg
- milk
- soy
- sesame
- peanut
- almond
- Brazil nut
- cashew
- hazelnut
- pistachio
- pine nut
- walnut
- macadamia
- pecan
- sulphites\*\*
- lupin.

\* Gluten need only be declared if it is present in wheat, barley, oats or rye ingredients. Barley, oats and rye do not need to be listed as allergens but must be listed as ingredients if present.

\*\* Sulphites must be declared when added in amounts equal to or more than 10 milligrams per kilogram of food.

\*\*\* Soy, soya, soybean must be described as 'soy' in the allergen list.

\*\*\*\*. The words listed must be used in the allergen list – for example, whey must be listed as 'milk', not 'whey'.

The presence of certain other foods, such as bee pollen, propolis, aspartame, guarana and phytosterols, trigger requirements for specific advisory statements.

Food sold to raise money solely for charitable or community causes, and not for personal financial gain, are exempt from labelling requirements, except for the need to declare the presence of royal jelly. Allergen information and directions for storage and use, must be provided on request.

For more information, visit [Food allergen rules](#).

## Electricity and gas supplies, fire extinguishers and work safety

- Food business operators (and event management) should ensure there is a sufficient supply of electricity for food handling activities, particularly for hot and cold food holding and heating water.
- Electricity should be supplied through proper supply poles equipped with all necessary safety devices (as required by legislation). All work should be carried out by a licensed electrician and conform to 'AS/NZS 3002-2008: Electrical Installations – Shows and Carnivals'. SafeWork NSW requires electrical appliances and leads to be tested at least annually, and identification tags attached.
- Fixed gas installations (such as in mobile food trucks) must be installed by a licensed gasfitter and comply with the appropriate provisions of 'AS/NZS 1596-2014: The Storage and Handling of LP Gas' and 'AS 5601-2022: Gas Installations'. A current compliance plate should be attached to the vehicle for new installations or any changes made to existing gas appliances.
- All portable gas appliances and appliances connected to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders must be certified to comply with Australian Standards by a certifier accredited by NSW Fair Trading. Refer to the NSW Fair Trading webpage on gas appliances: [fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/buying-products-and-services/product-and-service-safety/gas-safety](http://fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/buying-products-and-services/product-and-service-safety/gas-safety)
- Portable gas appliances should be located on a non-combustible surface with safe clearance distances from combustible materials and in a well-ventilated location. LPG cylinders should be secured so they remain upright and protected from damage. Refer to Energy Safe Victoria's Gas safety at public events brochure available at <https://www.esv.vic.gov.au/about->

[us/publications/brochures-and-merchandise/gas-safety-public-events](#) or contact SafeWork NSW for further information.

- Cartridge-operated appliances are not approved for use at public events. These appliances are commonly used in domestic situations and are fuelled by a disposable butane gas cartridge.
- A fire extinguisher and fire blanket should be supplied in any vehicle or stall where cooking or heating processes take place. Operators should be able to extinguish small fires if needed.
- Fire safety equipment should be easily accessible. The extinguisher should be suitable for dealing with the type of combustible materials present.
- Fire safety equipment should be tested annually and have current tagging in accordance with 'AS 1851-2012: Routine Service of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment'. Contact Fire and Rescue NSW for more information.
- All measures must be taken to comply with the requirements of SafeWork NSW to protect the health, safety and welfare of workers and visitors at the event. Contact SafeWork NSW for more information.

### Pollution prevention

Operations should not cause any harm to the environment (air, water, noise and surrounding lands). This is a requirement under the Protection of the *Environment Operations Act 1997*. Contact the local council for more information on the safe and legal disposal of wastewater.



### Temporary food stall layout

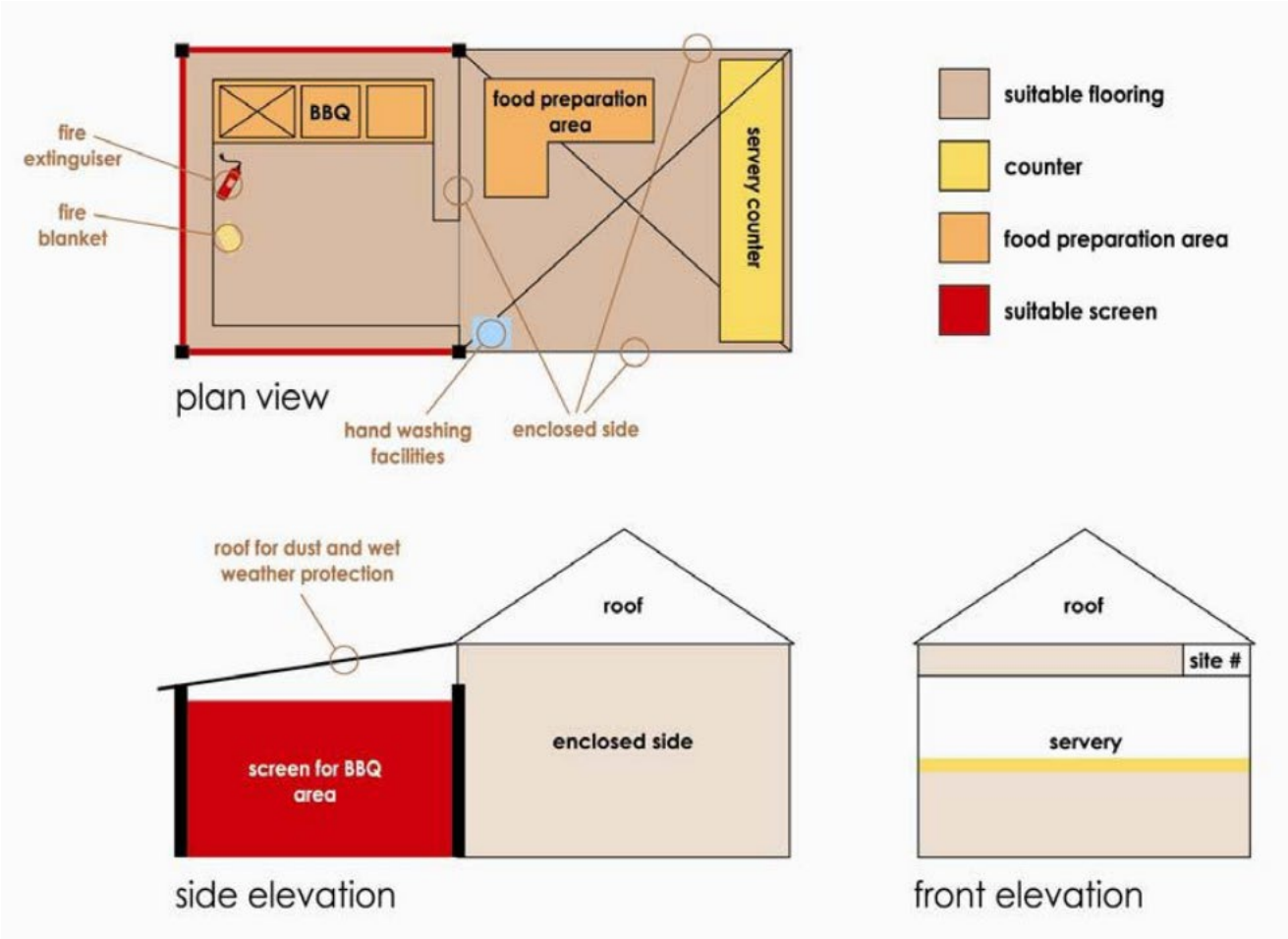


Figure 1 Plan view of temporary food stall layout

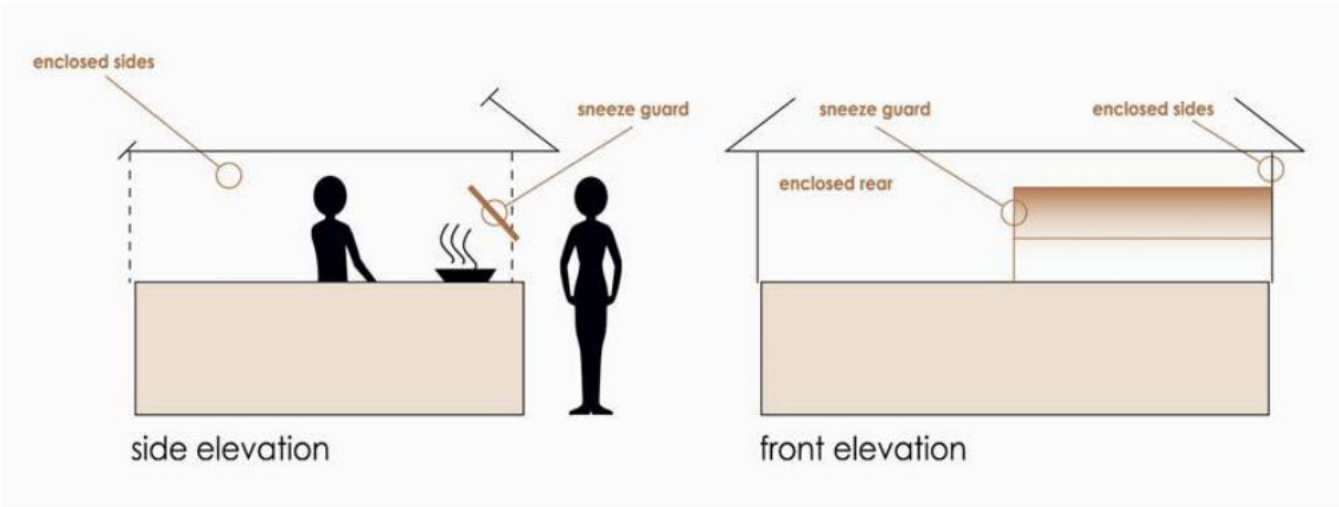


Figure 1 Side and front elevation details of temporary food stall.

---

## Temporary food stall checklist

Have you...?

1. Received the necessary approvals from the local council for:
  - home-based operations?
  - setting up at the event?
  - food vending vehicle inspection?
2. Notified your food business details to the appropriate authority?
3. Obtained public indemnity insurance?
4. Asked council about inspection fees?
5. Appointed a certified Food Safety Supervisor?
6. Checked your stall will:
  - be located in a dust free area, away from toilets and garbage bins?
  - have sufficient supply of potable water?
  - have adequate wastewater disposal facilities?
  - have adequate garbage bins?
  - have power?
  - have suitable construction, such as floor, walls and ceiling?
  - have food handling facilities for storage, cooking, hot/cold holding, preparation and serving?
  - have cleaning and hand washing facilities?
  - address safety issues, including fire control and SafeWork issues?
7. Provided a suitable vehicle and containers for the transport and storage of the food?
8. Addressed food handling operations adequately, including:
  - all food handlers are trained and have adequate skills and knowledge for their activities?
  - checked if there are potentially hazardous foods involved? If **YES**, then have you:
    - provided adequate hot or cold storage facilities (portable coolrooms, adequate supply of ice, hot boxes)?
    - checked there is a thermometer?
    - checked a sanitiser is available?
    - checked that frozen foods can be correctly thawed?
    - safely received, stored, processed, displayed and transported potentially hazardous food, and maintained cleaning and sanitisation, and be able to demonstrate it?
  - organised designated staff to handle money only, while other staff serve ready-to-eat food using tongs or gloves?
  - provided adequate measures to protect food from contamination (lidded containers, sneeze barriers)?
  - checked that eating and drinking utensils are protected from contamination until use?

- minimised the need for re-usable dinnerware and tableware?
- checked that packaged food is appropriately labelled?
- got adequate shelving so food is not stored on the ground?
- got adequate hand washing supplies, including soap and paper towels?

If you answered **NO** to any of these questions (except having potentially hazardous foods), then you may need to discuss these issues with the local council and/or change your management plan before the event begins.

---

## Contact information

Please contact your local council in the first instance, or the NSW Food Authority for further information.

### Local Government NSW (NSW councils)

Phone: 02 9242 4000

Website: [lgnsw.org.au](http://lgnsw.org.au)

Email: [lgnsw@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:lgnsw@lgnsw.org.au)

### NSW Food Authority

Tel: 1300 552 406

Website: [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

### Food Standards Australia New Zealand

Tel: 02 6271 2222 (Australia)

Website: [foodstandards.gov.au](http://foodstandards.gov.au)

### SafeWork NSW

Tel: 13 10 50

Website: [safework.nsw.gov.au](http://safework.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [contact@safework.nsw.gov.au](mailto:contact@safework.nsw.gov.au)

### Fire and Rescue NSW

Tel: 02 9265 2999

Website: [fire.nsw.gov.au](http://fire.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [info@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@fire.nsw.gov.au)

## Key definitions

### Adequate supply of water

Potable water available at a volume, pressure and temperature adequate for the purposes for which the water is used.

### Australian/New Zealand Standards

Australian Standard/New Zealand Standards are documents which are referenced by legislation to provide more detail on requirements and technical procedures. These standards can be purchased from Standards Australia on 1300 654 646 or by visiting its website at [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au).

### Coving

A curved junction between the floor and the wall.

### Equipment

A machine, instrument, apparatus, utensil or appliance — other than a single use item — used or intended to be used or in connection with food handling; includes any equipment used or intended to be used to clean the food premises or equipment.

### Food business

A business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves:

- handling of food intended for sale, or
- sale of food regardless of whether the business enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

### Food handler

Any person who directly engages in the handling of food, or who handles surfaces likely to come into contact with food for a food business.

### Food premises/market stall

Any premises including land vehicles, parts of structures, tents stalls and other temporary structures, boats, pontoons, including premises used principally as a private dwelling but not food vending machines or vehicles used only to transport food.

### Food Safety Standards

These are part of the [Food Standards Code](#) (under the NSW Food Act 2003 and Food Regulation 2010). They define requirements for food premises (which include vehicles), food handling practices, structural requirements and labelling.

### Food Safety Supervisor

A Food Safety Supervisor is a person who:

- is formally trained to recognise and prevent risks associated with food handling in food businesses
- holds a current NSW Food Authority FSS certificate (no more than 5 years old) as per the NSW Food Act Section 106B(1a)
- is not an FSS for any other food premises or mobile catering business

- trains and supervises other people in the business about safe food handling practices, and
- has the authority and ability to manage and give direction on the safe handling of food.

## Handling of food

Includes the making, manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, storing, transporting, delivering, preparing, treating, preserving, cooking, thawing, serving or displaying of food.

## Home jurisdiction

The home jurisdiction rule recognises the enforcement agency (i.e. local council) in whose area food is prepared before sale at a temporary event or in the case of a mobile food vendor the area where the mobile food vending vehicle is garaged.

## Potable water

Water suitable (safe) for drinking.

## Potentially hazardous food

Food that must be kept at certain temperatures to minimise the growth of any pathogenic micro-organisms that may be present in the food and/or to prevent the formation of toxins. This may include meat, seafood, dairy products, orange juice and cooked rice.

## Sanitising

A process that significantly reduces the number of micro-organisms present on a surface. This is usually achieved by using both heat and water or chemicals.

**‘Sell’** means:

- barter, offer or attempt to sell, or
- receive for sale, or
- have in possession, display, send, forward or deliver for sale, or
- dispose of for valuable consideration, or
- dispose to an agent for sale on consignment, or
- provide under contract of service, or
- supply food as a meal or part of a meal to an employee for consumption at work, or
- dispose of by way of raffle, lottery or other game of chance, or
- offer as a prize or reward, or • give away for the purpose of advertisement or in furtherance of trade, or
- supply under a contract with accommodation, service or entertainment, or
- give the food away from a food business to a person, or
- sell for the purpose of resale.

## Sewage

Discharge from toilets, urinals, basins, showers, sinks and dishwashers through a sewer or other means.

## Sinks

Includes sinks for food preparation, cleaner’s sink, utensil and equipment washing and personal hand washing basins.

## Temperature control

Maintaining food at a temperature of:

- 5°C or below if this is necessary to minimise the growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms in the food so that the microbiological safety of the food will not be adversely affected for the time the food is at that temperature, or
- 60°C or above, or
- another temperature – if the business demonstrates that maintenance of the food at this temperature for the period of time for which it is so maintained will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.

## Unsafe and unsuitable food

Food is considered unsafe if it is likely to cause physical harm to a person who might later consume it, assuming they treated the food correctly after purchase.

Food is considered unsuitable if it is damaged, deteriorated or perished to an extent that affects its intended use, e.g. out of date, poor maintenance or poor storage of chemicals or contains a substance that is foreign to the nature of the food (i.e. foreign matter or chemicals which may have fallen into the food).

## Warm water

Not hotter than 50oC in order to comply with Australian/New Zealand Standard 3500.4.2 (Plumbing and drainage: Part 4 – heated water services).

---

© State of New South Wales through Regional NSW 2023. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the Regional NSW as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December, 2023) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including the Regional NSW), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.